

The Woman's Column.

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The Woman's Column.

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FRANCES POWER COBBE.

The death of Frances Power Cobbe, in her eighty-second year, removes a noble and unique figure from English life.

In her delightful biography, published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Miss Cobbe mentions that her ancestors for four centuries had been country squires, and that not one of them, so far as recorded, had ever done a dishonorable thing. She was born at Newbridge, Ireland, Dec. 4, 1822, at sunrise. She was the daughter of Charles Cobbe and Frances Conway. Her father had served in the Mahratta cavalry in India, and had a medal. His wife used laughingly to say that he "went to jail on their wedding day," for he stopped on the journey home and visited a new prison, with a view to introducing improvements into Irish jails. Frances was the youngest of her family, and was born in her mother's forty-seventh year. She says in her autobiography:

I inherited a physical frame which, however defective even to the verge of grotesqueness from the æsthetic point of view, has been, as regards health and energy, a source of endless enjoyment to me. From childhood till now in my old age, mere natural existence has always been to me a positive pleasure. Exercise and rest, food and warmth, work, play and sleep, each in its turn has been delightful; and my spirits have kept a level of cheerfulness subject to no alternatives of depression save under the stress of actual sorrow. . . Had I been a man, I have sometimes dreamed I could have made my mark and done some masculine service to my fellow-creatures. But the woman's destiny which God allotted to me has been, I do not question, the best and happiest for me; nor have I ever seriously wished it had been otherwise; albeit I have gone through life without that interest which has been styled "woman's whole existence." Perhaps, if this book be found to have any value, it will partly consist in the evidence it must afford of how pleasant and interesting, and withal, I hope, not altogether useless a life is open to a woman, though no man has ever desired to share it, nor has she seen the man she would have wished to ask her to do so.

She had a happy and healthy though lonely childhood, spent much out of doors, riding, rowing, etc. As she grew to girlhood, she developed a strong taste for study, for reading and writing, and the morning sun sometimes found her still bending over her books, after being up all night. Her compositions astonished her



FRANCES POWER COBBE.

teachers. "As men and women who are to be good musicians love their pianos and violins as children, so I early began to love that noble instrument, the English language, and in my small way to study how to play upon it." She was educated first by governesses, later at a "young ladies' school." From sixteen years of age, for nearly twenty years she had the whole charge of her father's housekeeping, including the ordering of large dinner parties; and she always thoroughly enjoyed this sort of work, and did it well.

Her mind turned early to religious questions, with an intensity that made them for many years the absorbing interest of her life. Her parents belonged to the Church of England, but were not especially devout. Even as a child, she "loved God," and, to her, "religious exercises were real pleasures, like being taken to see somebody I loved." At seven years old, she revelled in Pilgrim's Progress, the Bible, and even "The Whole Duty of Man." At sixteen she began to doubt the miracles; she went through years of mental struggles and great unhappiness, and finally emerged into the serene Theism which she held so strongly and preached so ably all through her later life. She kept her change of views to herself during her mother's life, and until her father had recovered from the first sorrow of his wife's death. Then she told him frankly what her religious opinions had become. In those days, orthodoxy seems to have

been bigoted to a degree that now looks strange. Her father, an excellent man and a loving parent, was inexpressibly shocked to learn that she no longer believed in the supernatural inspiration of the Bible or in the deity of Christ. He said that "a man was called upon to keep the plague of such opinions from his own house." Frances was sent away from home for nearly a year, and faced the prospect of earning her own living, as she expected to be disinherited. Then her father recalled her, and for eight years she continued to sit at the head of his table, but was kept "in a sort of moral Coventry." She used to go out and pray in the garden while the family were at church, and writes:

I look back to the summer forenoons spent alone in that garden as to the flowering time of my seventy years. . . For fifty years Theism has been my staff of life. I must soon try how it will support me down the last few steps of my earthly way. I believe it will do it well.

Correspondence with Théodore Parker helped to bring her peace.

At thirty she wrote her first book—"Essay on the Theory of Intuitive Morals"—and published it anonymously, to spare her father's feelings. Longman, the publisher, to whom she offered it, smiled at the idea of a book on such a subject by a young lady. Her "spirit rose with the challenge," and she poured out to him much that she had been thinking of for years. He listened in silence, and then

said, without reading the MS., "I'll publish your book."

It made a considerable stir, its ability being praised and its heresy denounced. All the reviewers took it for granted that the author was a man. The *Caledonian Mercury* called it "a most noble performance, the work of a masculine and lofty mind." Miss Cobbe always considered this her most important work. It was written early in the morning and late at night, while she was acting as head and director of a large household, amusing her father, entertaining guests, teaching twice a week in her village school, and attending to every case of illness or trouble among the poor for miles around.

On her father's death, the homestead passed to her brother. Miss Cobbe felt very much her uprooting from the home which had become like a part of herself, but she courageously began a new life. She made a long journey, which took in Egypt and Jerusalem; enjoyed her travels vastly, and brought home not only a crop of new ideas, but a fresh sense of "the enormous amount of pure human goodness to be found almost everywhere. . . . For viewing human nature *en beau*, commend me to a long journey by a woman of middle age, of no beauty, and travelling as cheaply as possible, alone." She has described her journey in her book "Cities of the Past."

Miss Cobbe had inherited £200 a year, and was not forced to work, but to her active temperament idleness was impossible. She helped Mary Carpenter in her Reformatory and Ragged School work in Bristol, she gradually engaged more and more in workhouse visiting and looking after friendless girls, and improved the condition of sick and infirm paupers, devising various reforms, and supporting them with letters of much ability in the press. At forty, a severely sprained ankle disabled her for four years. She went to Europe, spent much time in Italy, and made the acquaintance of Mazzini, the Brownings, Mrs. Somerville, Harriet Hosmer, Mrs. Stowe, Rosa Bonheur, and other famous people, and met Theodore Parker for the first time at Florence, where he had come to die. Later she edited his works in twelve volumes, and supplied a full preface.

Miss Cobbe wrote much for the magazines and papers, published book after book, largely dealing with religious subjects, was correspondent from Rome and Florence for the *London Daily News*, and did a great amount of miscellaneous writing. After her return to London, for seven years she wrote three leading editorials a week for the *Echo*, besides other matter, and was a power in English journalism. After the *Echo* changed hands, she was for some years an editorial writer for the *Standard*. Miss Cobbe was a born reformer, with lance always couched against injustice, folly or cruelty; and her keen pen was truly "mightier than the sword." She was drawn more and more into reform work, and could give less and less time to journalism.

While working with Mary Carpenter, she came earnestly to desire various changes in the laws relating to young criminals and paupers, and Rev. Samuel J. May of Syracuse, N. Y., who visited

her at this time with a letter of introduction from Theodore Parker, converted her to woman suffrage. She became one of its ablest champions.

In 1862 Miss Cobbe read at the social science congress in London a paper advocating the opening of university degrees to women. The demand was ridiculed next morning by every paper in London. Just seventeen years later she went as one of a deputation to thank the president of London University for opening its degrees to women. She spoke and wrote for equal suffrage. She was largely instrumental in securing the law which allows poor women, if beaten and abused by their husbands, to have a legal separation and the custody of their children, with some allowance from their husbands' wages. There were at that time about 1,500 aggravated assaults on wives in England reported in court every year. The new law brought unspeakable relief. One sober and industrious woman, living in O—, had been frightfully abused for thirty-three years by a bad husband. When she learned from a friend that Miss Cobbe was responsible for the change in the law, "she kept saying, 'She's a lady—she's a lady. Bring her to O—, Missis! and we'll percession her down t' street!'"

A lecture of Miss Cobbe's on "The Little Health of Ladies," advocating less dosing and more fresh air and hygiene, had an excellent effect. The wife of a rich manufacturer, who had helped Miss Cobbe in her philanthropies, seemed a confirmed invalid, crawling with difficulty out of her carriage when she came to see Miss Cobbe, and lying on the sofa during the visits.

One day a tall, elegant woman, whom I scarcely recognized, walked firmly and lightly into my drawing-room, and greeted me cordially, with laughter in her eyes at my astonishment.

"So glad to see you well!" I exclaimed, "but what has happened to you?"

"It is you who have effected the cure."

"Good gracious! How?"

"Why, I read your 'Little Health of Ladies,' and I resolved to set my doctor at naught and go about like other people. And you see how well I am. There was really nothing the matter with me but want of exercise!"

In 1881 Miss Cobbe gave a course of noble lectures on "The Duties of Women," which have been republished by religious societies and the W. C. T. U., and went through three editions in England and eight in America. The part relating to political duties was circulated as a tract by our Suffrage Association.

Miss Cobbe knew almost all the famous people of her day in England, and not a few in America. She says:

I had the pleasure of receiving Mrs. Julia Ward Howe in Hereford Square, and also Mrs. Livermore, whose speech at one of our suffrage meetings realized my highest ideal of a woman's public address. Her noble face and figure like that of a Roman matron, her sweet manners and playful humor, without a scintilla of bitterness in it—as if she were a mother remonstrating with a foolish schoolboy son—were all delightful to me.

During the last part of her life Miss Cobbe's deepest interest was in the abolition of vivisection. The abominable and generally useless cruelties committed in its name revolted alike her clear head, her

warm heart, and her strong sense of right. She worked for its abolition with all her passion and power. A person interested in the cause left her a fortune, which she devoted to it. In the last chapter of her biography, she wrote:

It is my supreme hope that when, with God's help, our anti-vivisection controversy ends in years to come, long after I have passed away, mankind will have attained through it a recognition of our duties toward the lower animals far in advance of that which we now commonly hold. . . . At least, the time will come when no man worthy of the name will take pleasure in killing; and he who would torture an animal will be looked upon as in the truest sense inhuman.

In 1884 Miss Cobbe retired to Hengwrt, Dolgelly, Wales, a beautiful country place where she has since lived in retirement. Lord Shaftesbury and other friends bought her an annuity of £100 (about \$500) a year. On her eightieth birthday she was presented with such a testimonial to her eminent services to humanity, signed by a long list of the most distinguished persons of England and America, as few men or women ever received or deserved. Her mind was active to the last. Only a few weeks ago, we received from her a letter saying how much she enjoyed the *Woman's Journal*, and enclosing a report of the ordination of the first woman minister in England (to the pastorate of the Unitarian Church at Leicester).

Miss Cobbe was the author of the following books: *An Essay on Intuitive Morals*, 1855; *Religious Duty*, 1857; *Pursuits of Women*, 1863; *Cities of the Past*, 1863; *Broken Lights*, 1864; *Italics*, 1864; *Studies Ethical and Social*, 1865; *Hours of Work and Play*, 1867; *Dawning Lights*, 1868; *Alone, to Thee Alone*, 1871; *Darwinism in Morals*, 1872; *Hopes of the Human Race*, 1874; *False Beauty and True*, 1875; *Reëchoes*, 1876; *Duties of Women*, 1880; *The Peak in Darien*, 1881; *A Faithless World*, 1885. Miss Cobbe also issued a great number of pamphlets, among them *The Workhouse as a Hospital*, 1861; *Friendless Girls and How to Help Them*, 1861, containing an account of the Preventive Mission at Bristol; *Female Education*, 1862; *The Red Flag in John Bull's Eyes*, 1863; *Criminals, Idiots, Women and Minors*, *The Age of Science*, *The Moral Aspects of Vivisection*, *The Higher Expediency, Light in Dark Places*, *Science in Excelsis*, etc.—*Woman's Journal*.

NO STATE-REGULATED VICE FOR CHICAGO

Every once in awhile we read a statement that in some city an effort has been made to legalize prostitution. For many years no public effort of this kind was attempted in our great Western metropolis, Chicago; but our time came.

Alderman Hunter of the City Council presented a resolution asking that an effort be made to change the State law in order that cities might license prostitution, segregate it, and have enforced medical examination made of the women inmates of houses of ill fame. About the same time Captain Piper made an examination of the police force of Chicago for the City Club, and in his report concerning the inefficiency of the police he in-

serted a recommendation that prostitution be licensed.

These two things quite aroused the women. Three days after Captain Piper's recommendation, the Evanston Woman's Club passed a strong resolution condemning such action, and next day the Chicago Woman's Club, with its magnificent membership of a thousand, also passed a strong resolution against it.

The Chairman of the City Council Committee called a meeting Monday at which were representatives of many women's organizations, and some of the Ministers' Associations. I have never seen a set of men more uninterested and bored than were the aldermen on this committee. I have learned since that letters had been pouring in upon them in such numbers that they were already wearied of the question and opposed to the plan. One alderman told me he had time for little other business during the past week besides opening and reading letters of protest. Before half the speakers were heard, one alderman impatiently said, "There is no use going on further with these speeches. We are probably all of the same opinion. This matter would better be buried once for all, and so I move, Mr. Chairman." The crowd of ministers and women delegates who were standing around the five seated Solons were rather loath to cease their arguments, but, as all the aldermen present voted for this motion, with dawning relief the conference closed, after a session of a little over an hour. The Chairman of the Committee, Hon. Charles Alling, who is himself an earnest reform worker and Christian man, felt pleased that so strong a force had been out protesting. Thus the women of our city have shown again that good women are not the enemies of their unfortunate sisters, but their strongest defenders from additional infamy.

CATHARINE WAUGH McCULLOCH.

SUFFRAGE IN IRELAND.

While the Woman Suffrage Association was holding its annual meeting in Washington, the cause of equality at the polls as well as in the payment of taxes was not dormant elsewhere. In City Hall, Dublin, under the patronage of the Mansion House, the Irish Woman Suffrage Association held its convention last week, at which it was resolved, among other items of reform in connection with the new regime in Ireland, that Irish women should be authorized to vote for all candidates at every public election on the same qualifications as men. In a word, the women ask that the parliamentary franchise be extended to their sex. Already Irish women possess the municipal franchise. It was granted them by the provisions of the local government act, which became a law a few years ago. They took an active interest in the very first elections held under the new law. The eagerness with which they availed themselves of the privilege conferred and the excellent work they have done upon the various public boards to which some of their number have been elected have done much to strengthen their present request for complete suffrage. It appears to be generally admitted that they have

rendered very valuable service on the rural and urban councils, especially in reference to female inmates of public hospitals, workhouses and like institutions recently placed under the jurisdiction of local authority.

The president of last week's convention, which included 300 representative delegates, was the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Timothy Harrington, who is also a member of Parliament. In a vigorous address on the objects of the assemblage he asserted that the logic of accomplished facts shown by practical experience since the local government act came into operation had silenced much of the opposition to female suffrage that had formerly existed in Ireland and stifled its unreasoning clamor, and that it needed now but the revival of an energetic campaign to overthrow the last barriers of prejudice. On the platform with the Lord Mayor, who is one of the leading National members of Parliament, were other well-known Nationalists, as well as several Liberal-Unionists, including Thomas W. Russell, M. P. Able speeches were made by several of the ladies, who, although differing in religious belief and politics, were united in emphasizing the necessity for extending the parliamentary franchise to women, so that it might serve in their hands as a potent weapon with which to win much needed, reforms and without which their most zealous efforts would be retarded and unproductive in large results.—*Denver News*.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR IN NEW ZEALAND

Rev. Francis E. Clark is organizing Christian Endeavor Societies in New Zealand. In a letter to the *Christian Endeavor World* he says:

The public questions of the day interest in an unusual way the New Zealand young people. The young women vote on all questions as well as the young men. They keep posted on public matters. They are alive to the temperance issue. . . . The good-citizenship features of Christian Endeavor are very popular, and commend it to many men in public life.

A WOMAN CITY TREASURER.

Miss Florence G. Hill is acting as city treasurer pro tem. of Haverhill, Mass., at the regular pay of city treasurer. The treasurer stole \$45,000 of the city's money. "In the same room," a citizen of Haverhill writes, "there was a very competent lady assistant who had been there twenty-five years. The question came up, why not make her city treasurer? Someone said it was 'too much money for a woman to earn \$3000; besides, there were voters who wanted it.'" A local paper says that at present Miss Hill is "the only woman city treasurer in the United States." This is a mistake. There are a number of women holding this office in Colorado and the other equal suffrage States. Out West this seems to be a favorite position in which to place women, perhaps because they are thought to be less likely than men to take flight to Canada with the contents of the treasury. Miss Hill's parents were suffragists. Mr. E. P. Hill, a journalist, did much to aid the cause. We are glad that Miss Hill is doing the work and drawing the pay of city treasurer pro tem., and

we wish she were eligible to hold the office in her own right.

WOMAN'S WORK AND PUBLIC SAFETY.

Dr. Loring W. Puffer of Brockton, Mass., contributes to the *New England Farmer* an article that is timely, in view of the recent embezzlement of \$45,000 by the city treasurer of Haverhill, Mass., and the discussion as to whether a woman can be appointed as his successor. Dr. Puffer says:

Would not the great body politic be better, and would not the capital of individuals, firms and corporations be safer, if their books were in the care of competent women, instead of as it is now usually conducted, almost wholly by men?

As we glance over the morning paper we expect, and almost always see, this startling item: "Another good man gone wrong." The article states the fact of his being a devout member of some church, possibly the superintendent of a Sunday School, and that he stood high in the community, and, so far as is known, had no bad habits. Now, in view of their commonness, why does it not occur to more individuals to suggest a large increase of women in these positions, instead of continuing almost exclusively the employment of men? Everyone knows, who has tried it, that women are more trustworthy than men. A case of default by a woman might occur, probably it sometimes does, but only just often enough to make an exception to the rule. I do not recall a single instance of one that I ever saw in print. Defaulting by men in responsible positions is actually one of the commonest things printed. Think of the heartaches and homes ruined thereby, and now, after a long experience, I respectfully suggest, as a remedy, a much larger employment of women in responsible positions, as both politic and wise.

Why should not a woman be paid the same price that a man receives if the work is as well done? It has always seemed to me to be unjust to discount a woman's wages on account of clothing worn. Suppose Deborah Sampson had been a teacher a part of the time she had been in the United States army. Would she not have received the pay of a man, and because she was in the clothing of a man? Is it the clothing or the brain and the pose that fix the meets and bounds and the value rendered by the teacher? A woman is not supposed to be valued according to her fighting qualities or her brawn. Should not the price be governed by her attainments, and her ability to communicate in an intelligent and proper manner to unformed and undeveloped minds, as well as for that peculiar manner given to woman only by her Creator, to soothe, encourage and uplift in their worship in the Temple of Knowledge? Why should this injustice be longer visited on the women? Why should they be compelled to receive only 33 per cent. to 50 per cent. less than man for exactly the same work? Is it because woman is not as good as man, not as graceful, or inferior in any respect, in her physical proportions or mental make-up?

Then, in the future, why not do justice to women?

JUDGE LINDSEY AND THE BOYS.

The Denver News says:

Judge Lindsey of the Denver county court has tried another experiment which, though it did not meet with the hearty approval of some of those who are watching the work of the juvenile court, was wholly successful. The judge found it necessary to send two more of the boys of his court to the Industrial School at Golden. Everybody seemed to have given the two lads up for thoroughly bad, but Judge Lindsey still had faith in them and he told them so. He said it would be necessary for him to send them to Golden because they could not be properly cared for in this city, and the home influence was not such as to assist the work of the court.

"Now, Charley, you know that every one in this town says you are one of the worst boys ever known here," said the judge, who refrained from giving the lad's full name because he hopes that the boys will still have a bright future. "I do not believe it, though, and I know that you will do the best you can to make a good boy. I do not want to send you to Golden with an officer, for I know it would make you feel bad."

Then, turning to the other boy, the judge said that he would send each to Golden in charge of the other.

The boys arrived at Golden in the middle of the afternoon, and before arriving at the office of the superintendent of the institution, they were met by a number of boys on the playground. They were advised by these to "tear up their roots" and get out as fast as they could, for the reform school was a terrible place. The boys are said by the superintendent to have stopped long and thought. Finally Charley, who has caused so much trouble in this city, and who Judge Lindsey has been advised a number of times should be placed where he could not get away, decided that, since they both had promised the judge that they would go to the superintendent, they must keep their word. This they did, and, stifling the temptation to get away, the two youngsters—the oldest only eleven—marched to the superintendent of the school and delivered their writs.

It will be remembered that Miss Kate M. Gordon met Judge Lindsey at the recent National Conference of Charities and Correction, and was told that the votes of Colorado women had much to do with keeping him in the office which he fills so well.

JUDGE L. W. CUNNINGHAM ON EQUAL SUFFRAGE.

Shortly after woman suffrage became a law, the Good Government ticket in Colorado City came near being elected from top to bottom. The mayor, a pronounced prohibitionist, was elected, and reelected the following spring with his entire ticket. This gave the enemy such a shock that ever afterwards they omitted all saloon-keepers from their ticket.

In Colorado City, during the years from 1883 to 1893 inclusive, there were six mayors, or presidents of the board, as they were at first called, who were saloon-

keepers. During the same period there was but one year when a saloon-keeper was not in the town council, and that year the mayor was a saloon-keeper. During two or three years there were three saloon-keepers in the council, and for one year we had a mayor and three councilmen who lived on the woes of others. Since 1894, when women came to their own, there has never been a saloon-keeper elected.

Women have always had the privilege of voting at school elections in this State, and, as a consequence, while saloon men were represented on the city council, not one ever served on a school board in our town.

The attempt was made in the spring of 1889 to place a saloon-keeper of large means on our school board in order to depose a city superintendent who was a temperance advocate and insisted on teaching his doctrine in the schools. Reversing the street phrase, the women didn't do a thing for him, and as a result he was overwhelmingly defeated, though theretofore and thereafter elected to a seat in the city council by the male voters.

Before the right of women was recognized, there were in our town four dance halls and variety theatres of the very lowest type. These have disappeared. Pianos are no longer punished in saloons, where formerly the night was made hideous with their strumming.

I speak in detail of affairs in my own town, not because it is above or below the average city similarly situated, but because I think it is an average Colorado town, and because I am able to speak from experience and personal knowledge. From a letter received from an attorney at Pueblo, I learn that no saloon-keeper has ever been elected to office in Pueblo since the adoption of equal suffrage, although their presence in the council was quite the rule prior to its adoption.—*Colorado Springs Telegraph*.

EQUAL SUFFRAGE IN COLORADO.

It is a noteworthy fact that there is a great deal more said about woman suffrage in the States where it does not exist than in those where women who desire to do so may express their choice for candidates and public policies. In Colorado, where the experiment has been tried for many years with complete success, the matter is seldom discussed or referred to. The people are satisfied, and there is not the least evidence of a desire on the part of any considerable element to reopen the discussion. The question is settled, and settled permanently.

It is only when some one who is interested in the question outside of the State desires to investigate the working of the Colorado suffrage system that we are treated to more or less radical expressions of opinion, and curious contortions of the facts for or against woman suffrage, and are thus reminded of the discussion that raged fiercely here when the matter was under consideration by our own people. Again we hear that woman cannot fight, therefore she must not vote; we catch the echo of the frightful threat that we are destroying the home; we hear the cries of

the children who suffer while mother shrieks from the political stump; and are puzzled over the problem as to whether womankind really desires to vote.

All these matters and many more that might be rehearsed have been swept out of existence in Colorado.

One abiding fact remains:

The woman who desires to vote may do so; and doubt of the inherent justice of this principle is not present in sufficient measure to form the basis for an argument in public, and rarely in private life.

Woman suffrage has brought none of the evils that were predicted by its opponents.

Woman suffrage is here to stay.

It is a success.

Woman's influence is felt in politics. That influence is welcomed and not resented.

Colorado is not particularly concerned whether other States follow our example or not.

We are satisfied with our present system, and there is not the least probability that we will ever go back to the old one.—*Pueblo Chieftain*.

The Woman's Journal,

Founded by Lucy Stone, 1870.

A Weekly Newspaper, published every Saturday, at 3 Park Street, BOSTON, devoted to the interests of women, and especially to equal suffrage.

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